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perished. In all three parties set forth to relieve the remainder of the Donner expedition encamped in the mountains. The rescued and often the rescuers endured the most frightful suffering. Reduced to subsisting on bark, shoe strings and hide, many starved, and eventually the bodies of the dead became the only hope for the living. Scarcely half the party survived to see the "Promised Land" for which they had set out.

To one who would understand the toil, the suffering, the courage, in short, the human element involved in the task of settling the country and preparing for the development of its resources, the account of this tragic episode in the westward movement will be well worth the reading. The author, a daughter of the party's leader, though scarcely four years of age at the time, had the events indelibly impressed upon her mind. To some extent she has relied on others' narratives but the greater part consists of her own recollections. These also cover her life in California down to the time of her marriage at the opening of the Civil War and give an excellent picture of the California of those days. It may be noted that on the controverted point whether or not Lewis Keseberg killed her mother the author generously absolves him of all guilt. Throughout this intimate and entertainingly written account we see a broad-minded, magnanimous, and sympathetic character.

Socialism and Character. By VIDA D. SCUDDER. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1912. 8vo, pp. 431. \$1.50 net.

In this book, written by an avowed socialist—"a class-conscious, revolutionary socialist, if you will—to whom none the less the spiritual harvest, the fruits of character, are the only results worth noting in any economic order" (pp. 5-6), we have an attempt to harmonize socialism and religion. Though frankly idealistic and plainly disposed toward religion, Miss Scudder yet sees in socialism the only solution of "the dilemma" which faces the modern world. An aristocratic solution such as that of Nietzsche is impossible because "we are made on another pattern" (p. 50); the abandonment of civilization illustrated in the "anarchist asceticism" of Tolstoy "makes the Great Refusal, which is the refusal of life itself" (p. 50); moralizing in the form of philanthropy and reform has been tried and proved a failure—what promise of light is left if not in socialism?

But how dissolve the real differences between socialism and religion? The answer for Miss Scudder lies in a spiritualizing of the chief doctrines of socialism to which she subscribes, namely, economic determinism, and class-antagonism (for which latter she uses the word "class-feeling" as less harsh), and in a certain socializing of religion. But not only are these capable of being harmonized, they are in reality of the utmost importance the one to the other. "Should socialism," she says, "arrive otherwise than as the result of an inward transformation, affecting the deep springs of will and love, it would be the worst disaster . . . that the world has seen" (p. 187); and on the other hand, "religious minds honestly scanning the situation may well discern the

most powerful of allies" in socialism (p. 273). Character will make socialism possible and socialism will make character—such seems to be the conclusion at which the author has arrived.

Whatever may be said in criticism the book is meritorious and will be read with keen interest. The literary style is excellent and enriched by apt quotations from some of the best writers in the English and in continental languages. We doubt if the beliefs here expounded will receive general acceptance among orthodox clericals or the general rank and file of socialists, but for the general reader this will detract little from their interest.

The History of the British Post-Office. By J. C. HEMMEON. Cambridge: Harvard University, 1912. 8vo, pp. vi+256. \$2.00 net.

The British Post-office, like all other British institutions of long standing, has had a most intricate and involved history. It has successfully met the needs of the people and of the government under conditions which to us would seem quite impossible. As a system it has been neither logical nor uniform.

To the most difficult task of presenting historically the facts connected with its peculiar and many-sided development, this book is devoted. Commencing at about the end of the fifteenth century the author has traced chronologically in his first four chapters the growth and evolution of the Post-office in all its different branches, through its successive transformations down to the present time. In these chapters a tremendous conglomerate of facts illustrative of the most salient features of the development is presented to the reader. Every happening or event of any importance and indeed many which can hardly be said to be of any interest are here recorded.

In the remaining chapters some of the more important aspects of the problem have been singled out to receive consideration in "longitudinal section." Of these might be mentioned the chapter on "Foreign Connections," which considers the ocean carriage of mails, the system of subsidies to authorized lines and understandings with other nations; that on the "Telegraph System," which since 1868 has been a branch of the Post-office—special regard being here paid to its finances; and on the relation between the Post-office and Telephone companies which have been licensed by it.

The book is excellent. It is quite evidently the result of considerable and careful research. It must be criticized however in that being so entirely a narration of facts, those events which really are of great significance have not been sufficiently emphasized. A little weighting of facts would have been an improvement. One would like to have seen, too, some little interpretation.

The Socialist Argument. By CHARLES C. HITCHCOCK. Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Co., 1912. 8vo, pp. 174.

This is the work of an amateur in socialism. Unfortunately such dilettantism in socialist literature is of frequent occurrence. After a careful perusal